

sent here without any limitation of time, to discuss important questions touching the future government of the State of Maryland. It is on all occasions to be witnessed that some individuals are very anxious to press business through. Those generally who are not speakers themselves, and who seem to believe that no information can be communicated by those who do speak, they are, therefore, anxious to shorten debate. But that is not my view, and I do not think the Convention as a body should sanction that idea. We are here not only for the purpose of communication to the members of this body, who are to act primarily on the Constitution, but we must at the same time bear in mind continually, or else in my judgment a false view of the subject is taken, that there are others to act upon this Constitution—that it is to be submitted to the mass of the voters in the State for confirmation or condemnation.—Now, I hold that every member who entertains the idea, however vain it may be, that he can enlighten the members of this Convention, or the community outside of the Convention, is entitled to the opportunity to present such views as he may think calculated to accomplish his purpose, and I do not think it is exactly proper that that disposition should be smothered by these continual attempts to prevent full discussion in this House.

We began by limiting speeches to an hour. Now, such a question as this cannot be discussed by any man in an hour. I heard Mr. Webster discuss this question, and he was as able a debater as any in this country, and as able to condense his views as any man, yet he made no attempt to discuss this subject in the Senate of the United States in an hour. Nor did Mr. Hayne, his adversary, attempt to do so. I was present at the time and heard that discussion. We adopted the hour rule here, and then after a speech or two comes a proposition to shut out all debate on this subject, by calling the previous question. Then we have a proposition for an afternoon session. And now my friend before me (Mr. Stockbridge) brings forward a further proposition to stop all debate this afternoon.

I know there are several gentlemen here who desire to be heard upon this subject. And although a member of the committee, and considering myself entitled to be heard, I had not proposed to debate this question until everybody else had spoken who desired to speak. It may, perhaps, be better for the Convention to avoid the opportunity of hearing me speak, and to shut out everybody else from speaking. But I speak now as much in behalf of others as of myself. I do think the majority of this body are urging this question of expedition beyond any reasonable extent. And I shall be very happy if I can persuade them that such is the case, and that this subject should be discussed to the fullest extent. As the gentleman from

Baltimore city (Mr. Barron) says, with great liberality, let every thing be said on this subject that can be said; keep nothing back from the public. I do hope gentlemen will perceive that they are carrying this matter of restraint beyond the proper limit; and that they will not further attempt to tie down those who desire to express their views upon this subject.

Now, in order to test the sense of the Convention, whether they will meet the view of the subject I have presented, I move to lay this order on the table.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. I hope the gentleman from Kent (Mr. Chambers) will withdraw that motion for a moment.

Mr. CHAMBERS. I will withdraw it, to allow the mover of the order an opportunity to reply, if he will renew it.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. I will renew it, though of course I shall vote against it.

The motion to lay on the table was accordingly withdrawn.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. I desire to say in reply to the gentleman from Kent (Mr. Chambers,) as I said when I offered this order, that I do not do it for the purpose of stifling debate upon this question. But I considered it due in fairness to the members of the Convention on all sides, that there should be an understanding as to the time at which debate should close upon this article, and the vote be taken. There are members of this Convention who may be absent, if they do not know when the vote will be taken. Yesterday, most unexpectedly to all of us I am sure, the previous question was demanded. If no order like this be adopted, the previous question may be demanded at some other time when gentlemen are absent from this Hall, and it may be ordered by this Convention. I thought it but just and proper that a distinct understanding should be had that at some time, fixed and agreed upon on all sides, this debate should be closed, and the vote taken. I did not know who of the Convention desired to discuss the question; but I designed to give sufficient time for them all to be heard. If five o'clock to-day is too soon, then make it twelve o'clock to-morrow, or five o'clock to-morrow, or twelve o'clock day after to-morrow. Fix upon a time so that all can speak who wish; but I do hope that something embodying the principle contained in this order will be adopted by this Convention, in order that those who desire to vote on this question may know the time when it will be necessary for them to be in attendance; and if they wish to hear the debate, they will know when to attend for that purpose.

As I promised, I now renew the motion to lay on the table, designing to vote against it.

On this motion, Mr. MARBURY called the yeas and nays, which were ordered.

The question being then taken, by yeas and nays, resulted—yeas 36, nays 46—as follows: